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HANDLING INDICATOR

TO : Department of State

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RS/AN  
ANALYSIS BRANCH

DATE: MARCH 21, 1972

FROM : AmEmbassy BONN

SUBJECT : Security Chief to Retire Prematurely

REF :

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Drafted by: POL:APBrainard:cm

Drafting Date: 3/20/72

Phone No.: 3244

Contents and Classification Approved by: POL:JDean

Clearances:

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It was announced in Bonn on March 7 that Federal Office for the Protection of the Constitution President (Bundesamt fuer Verfassungsschutz) Hubert Schruibbers would retire six months prematurely. Schruibbers has been under fire for his role as a court prosecutor during the Nazi era, following a Spiegel article giving details of his work as a young prosecutor in the Westphalian State Supreme Court. An inquiry ordered by Interior Minister Genscher concluded that Schruibbers' activities had been known at the time of his appointment in 1955.

COMMENT: Some weeks ago, Schruibbers told an Embassy officer that he would not retire under fire. Consequently, the fact that he accepted Genscher's proposal -- early retirement in exchange for a clean bill of health -- came as a surprise. We have reason to believe that Schruibbers' switch was caused by family pressure.

The Opposition has charged that the real reason behind Schruibbers' early retirement was that he had been too energetic in cracking down on left radicals. Schruibbers has been very conscious of the left radical danger, and authored the 1970 Report on the subject (see Bonn's A-508, May 26). However, had Spiegel not surfaced his background, nothing would have been done about it and he would have quietly finished out his term. It/also seems clear that his early ouster was not at all motivated by his harsh posture vis a vis detente with the East. We guess that Guenther Nollau, former Vice President under Schruibbers and presently Interior Ministry Director of Public Safety (a protege of SPD Vice Chairman Herbert Wehner)

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was informed about the Spiegel account. Nollau may well have instigated it since he has badly wanted Schroeblers' job. However, Nollau's chances have dropped to nil with the disclosure that he applied for NSDAP membership in 1941 (and received it in 1942).

Since the British ouster of the 105 Soviet diplomats, Gengeher has been more than willing to pursue Eastern European espionage activities in the Federal Republic; this decision of Gengeher's precedes by several months the controversy over Schroeblers.

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